

In the Specification

Applicant presents new replacement paragraphs below indicating the changes with insertions indicated by underlining and deletions indicated by strikeouts and/or double bracketing.

Please replace the paragraphs from page 3, line 1 to page 3, line 5 with the amended paragraphs as follows:

Figure 3 is a side view of the Figure 1 embodiment;

Figure 4 is a cross-sectional view of the embodiment along the line 4-4 in Figure 3;

Figure 5 is a bottom view of the Figure 1 embodiment; and

Figure 6 is a bottom view of an attachment arrangement between a runner and a spacer in an illustrative embodiment[.]; and

Figure 7 is a perspective view of another illustrative embodiment of the invention.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 6 with the amended paragraph as follows:

In one aspect of the invention, the spacers 2 may provide a type of suspension between the deck 1 and the runner 3. The suspension may be spring-biased and/or dampened to provide a smooth ride on rough surfaces. For example, one or more spacers 2 may include an elastomer material, such as a rubberized washer positioned between the spacers 2 and the deck 1 or runner 3. The washer or other element may serve to absorb vibration that might otherwise be transmitted from the runner 3 through the spacers 2 to the deck 1. Alternately, a shock dampening material may be incorporated into the structure of the spacers 2. In one embodiment, one or more of the spacers 2 may be arranged to allow the deck 1 and the runner 3 to move toward each other, decreasing the distance between the deck 1 and the runner 3. For example, as shown in Figure 7, a spacer 2 may include a spring-biased hinge 20 having an axis of rotation perpendicular to the length of the snowdeck such that one portion 21 of the hinge 20 attached to

the deck 1 may rotate relative to another portion 22 of the hinge 20 attached to the runner 3. Relative rotation of the hinge portions may allow the deck 1 and the runner 3 to move toward and away from each other, and/or allow the deck 1 or runner 3 to move longitudinally relative to the other. Bias on the hinge, e.g., to move the deck 1 and runner 3 away from each other to a starting separation distance, may be provided by a metallic coil or leaf spring, elastomer material or other suitable material or device. Of course, it should be understood that the hinge is only one illustrative example. Other arrangements for allowing movement of the deck 1 and runner 3 toward each other, relative rotation of the deck 1 or runner 3 about an axis perpendicular to the length of the snowdeck, and/or longitudinal movement of the deck 1 or runner 3 relative to each other will occur to those of skill in the art. For example, the spacers 2 may be made of a resilient material that allows such movement or rotation, while preventing relative pivoting of the deck 1 and the runner 3 around a longitudinal axis. Thus, the suspension function described above is provided by the spacers 2 while still maintaining a rigid attachment between the deck 1 and runner 3 so that portions of the two may not pivot relative to each other about a longitudinal axis.

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